

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 3733

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: AORG, ILO

SUBJ: ILO-GENEVA GROUP EXAMINATION OF US INITIATIVE ON

"NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ILO"

REF: GENEVA 1102, 2233

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: GENEVA GROUP (ILO) MEETING JUNE 4 DISCUSSED US PROPOSAL FOR GROUP COOPERATION IN JOINT STUDY OF "NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ILO". GENERALLY DISAPPOINTING AND HIGHLY QUALAIFIED RESPONSES TO US PROPOSAL BY GROUP MEMBERS LEADS US DEL TO ILO AND MISSION TO RECOMMENDATION THAT QUESTION OF US SPONSORSHIP FOR STUDY BE RECONSIDERED BY DEPARTMENT. GUIDANCE REQUESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. GENEVA GROUP (ILO) MEETING, CHAIRED BY US AND ATTENDED REPS ALL MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS, DISCUSSED US PROPOSAL FOR GG STUDY OF ILO PROPOSED AT 11TH CONSULTATION ON SPECIALIZED AGENCIES ON FEB 6 AND 7.

3. DEPT WILL RECALL THAT THIS IS THIRD SPECIAL MEETING SUBSEQUENT TO CONSULTATION. OTHER SPECIAL MEETINGS (REFTELS) WERE FEB 19 AND APRIL 5. GROUP CONTINUED ITS ENDEAVOR REACH AGREEMENT ON UNCLASSIFIED

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WHETHER AND, IF SO , HOW TO PROCEED WITH PROPOSED STUDY.

INITIAL PROPOSAL CALLED FOR EVALUATION OF ILO'S PRESENT AND FUTURE ROLES BASED, IN PART, ON CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN POLITICAL AND BUDGETARY PROBLEMS. STUDY WAS TO BE BASIS FOR FORWARD LOOK AT WHAT ILO SHOULD BE GOING OVER COMING TEN-YEAR PERIOD. ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF ORIGINALLY US PROPOSAL WERE:

A. STUDY WOULD HAVE OBJECT OF DETERMINING WHAT GG AS AN ENTITY THOUGHT ILO SHOULD BE DOING IN NEXT TEN YEARS.
B. GG WOULD ENDORSE FINDINGS AS A GROUP, AND PRESENT THEM TO ILO DG AS GROUP EFFORT.
C. FINDINGS WOULD REFLECT ONLY THE VIEWS OF GG MEMBER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING VIEWS THEIR WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS; AND THAT TO INSURE THIS, GG COUNTRIES WOULD MAKE STUDIES WITHOUT ASSISTANCE OF THE ILO SECRETARIAT. INVOLVEMENT OF SECRETARIAT MIGHT TEND RESULT IN STUDIES SLANTED THE WAY SECRETARIAT WOULD WANT THEM TO READ. INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY PARTS OF THE STUDY EXPECTED TO REQUIRE ONE OR MORE MAN MONTHS OF WORK FOR EACH PARTICIPATING GOVERNMENT.

4. IN RESPONSE TO SOUNDINGS OF OTHER GG MEMBERS; US PROPOSAL HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLY MODIFIED. REFERENCES TO POLITICAL PROBLEMS WERE DROPPED AND EMPHASIS SHIFTED FROM EVALUATION OF ONGOING ILO PROGRAM TO FORWARD LOOK. THIS RESULTED MAINLY FROM GG MEMBERS' WISHES AVOID POLITICAL ASPECTS AND GENERAL INABILITY TO DEVOTE NECESSARY MANPOWER AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO MAKING STUDIES IN SUCH DEPTH. WHAT US AHD FORESEEN AS A JOINT STUDY BY GOVERNMENTS MAINTAINING THEIR DISTANCE FROM ILO SECRETARIAT HAS NOW INCREASIGLY TAKEN ON AIR OF A REVIEW OF DATA PREPARED BY OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SECRETARIAT.

5. DEGREE OF GG SUPPORT FOR AN AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE US INITIATIVE HAS FLUCTUATED. AT HIGH WATER MARK, EXCLUSIVE OF WHATEVER STUDY WAS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE US, SIX OF THE TEN GG MEMBERS--BELGIUM, CANADA, FRANCE, FRG, JAPAN, AND UK, AND ONE OF THE TWO OBSERVERS--SWITZERLAND--AGREED UNDERTAKE STUDIES. IN ADDITION, AUSTRALIA INDICATED INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING, THOUGH DID NOT MAKE FIRM COMMITMENT.

6. JUNE 4 MEETING, COMPRISING LARGELY REPS FROM CAPITALS IN GENEVA FOR ILO CONFERENCE, REVEALED A NEGATIVE SENTIMENT ON THE PART OF SEVERAL MEMBERS NOT HITHERTO OBSERVED. POINT THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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APPEARED TO BOTHER MANY GG MEMBERS MOST WAS US CONCEPT OF DOING STUDIES WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OF ILO SECRETARIAT. THEY FELT THIS WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY OFFENSIVE TO DG AND SENIOR ILO STAFF AND TO LDCS. SOME FELT THAT SEPARATE GG STUDIES WERE UNNECESSARY, BECAUSE ILO DOCUMENTS HAVE IMPROVED IN QUALITY (PARTICULARLY LONG-TERM PLAN AND IN-DEPTH REVIEWS) AND ARE ENTIRELY ADEQUATE AS BASIS FOR EITHER EXAMINATION OF ONGING ACTIVITIES OR FORWARD LOOK. NO ONE RESPONDED TO CONCEPT OF TEN

YEAR FORWARD LOOK. AND AUSTRALIA, WHOSE REP TO ILO CONFERENCE WAS MOST OUTSPOKEN CRITIC, CHALLENGED THE FEASIBILITY "GIVEN THE DYNAMIC WORLD IN WHICH WE ARE LIVING".

7. FOLLOWING IS SKELETON SUMMARY OF GG VIEWS EXPRESSED ON JUNE 4:

A. AUSTRALIA--INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO DO STUDY; WITHDRAWS TENTATIVE OFFER TO PARTICIPATE; DOUBTED FEASIBILITY OF MAKING TEN YEAR FORECAST. US PROPOSAL NEEDS FURTHER EXAMINATION; SUGGESTED TWO FULL-DAY SESSION OF GENEVA GROUP BE DEVOTED TO THIS SUBJECT IN NOVEMBER.

B. BELGIUM--HAD NOT READ LATEST US PAPER, HAD TO RESERVE POSITION.

C. CANADA-ITS PARTICIPATION IN JOINT EFFORT WOULD COMPRISE ANALYSIS OF ILO IN-DEPTH STUDY OF STANDARD SETTING. COULD NOT SUPPORT ANY STUDY THAT WAS NOT CO-ORDINATED WITH ILO SECRETARIAT; DOUBTED PROPOSED STUDIES WOULD GENERATE NEW IDEAS; FELT REAL PROBLEM IS TO MAKE BETTER USE OF EXISTING REVIEW FACILITIES WITHIN GOVERNING BODY; PROPOSED THAT GG HAVE STUDY SESSIONS ON ILO DOCUMENTS EARLY IN GOVERNING BODY SESSIONS.

D. DRG--COLLABORATION WITH ILO SECRETARIAT IS NECESSARY; FRG STUDY ON HUMANIZATION OF WORK HAD ALREADY INVOLVED SECRETARIAT. (NB THIS IS STUDY FRG PREPARING FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL USE, AND WHICH IT INTENDED TO SUBMIT TO GG AS ITS CONTRIBUTION TO NEW DIRECTIONS).

E. FRANCE--EVEN SCALED DOWN US PROPOSAL IS TOO AMBITIOUS; WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CARRY OUT STUDIES WITHOUT HELP OF ILO SECRETARIAT; DIRECT GG APPROACH TO ILO DG TO PRESENT HIM WITH ITS CO-ORDINATED FINDINGS MIGHT BE REGARDED AS UNACCEPTABLE PRESSURE. GG SHOULD LIMIT ITS CONCERN TO CURRENT PROBLEMS, AND NOT MAKE ACADEMIC FUTURE STUDIES. FRANCE, HOWEVER, STILL PREPARED TO STUDY "STRENGTHENING OF TRIPARTITE STRUCTURES", BECAUSE THIS BEARS DIRECTLY ON QUESTIONS OF ILO STRUCTURE WHICH CURRENTLY UNCLASSIFIED

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UNDER REVIEW.

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F. ITALY--GOI HAS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD LATEST US PAPER, WAS EXAMINING POSSIBILITY OF CHOOSING ONE OF THREE DIFFERNT STUDY TOPICS BUT UNABLE MAKE FIRM COMMITMENT AS YET.

G. JAPAN-STILL WILLING TO DO STUDY ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING, BUT LACK OF TIME AND MONEY WOULD RESTRICT IT LARGELY TO JAPAN'S OWN DOMESTIC SITUATION WITHOUT SEEKING DATA FROM ITS DIPLOMATIC OR FREIGN ASSISTANCE CONTACTS. JAPAN THINKS NOVEMBER 1974 DEADLINE FOR REPORTING IS TOO EARLY.

H. NETHERLANDS--INSUFFICIENT STAFF TO MAKE STUDY, AND DOUBTED PROJECT WOULD UNCOVER MANY NEW IDEAS ANYWAY. NO OBJECTION IF OTHER GOVERNMENTS WANT TO GO AHEAD.

I. UK-CONSIDERED TITLE "NEW DIRECTIONS" MIGHT BE PROVOCATIVE AND SUGGESTED INSTEAD "A FORWARD LOOK AT ILO". UK WOULD PROCEED WITH ITS STUDY ON ILO STATISTICS, BUT HAD ALREADY DIRECTLY INVOLVED ILO SECRETARIAT.

J. SWEDEN-GOS UNDECIDED ON CONTRIBUTING TO STUDY; FINDS ILO'S LONG-TERM PLAN AN ADEQUATE BASIS FOR A FORWARD LOOK; FEELS ANY STUDY SHOULD BE MADE IN CONJUNCTION WITH ILO SECRETARIAT.

K. SWITZERLAND-CONTINUED POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD STUDY BUT DESPITE ITS EARLIER COMMITMENT WAS UNABLE ALLOCATE RESOURCES TO ENABLE PARTICIPATION.

8. AFTER LISTENIN TO GENERALLY DISCOURAGING GO-AROUND DESCRIBED UNCLASSIFIED

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7, US REP (HEATER) REVIEWED ORIGINAL ELEMENTS OF US PROPOSAL AS DESCRIBED IN PARA TWO ABOVE. HE SUMMARIZED SENSE OF MEETING AS APPARENTLY INDICATIN THAT THERE WAS NO WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR ANY OF THESE THREE ELEMENTS. IN VIEW OF THIS, HE FELT IT NECESSARY TO COMMUNICATE WITH PRINCIPALS IN WASHINGTON TO DETERMINE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO PROCEED WITH THE INITIATIVE UNDER THESE CONDITIONS.

9. UK DCM ANN Warburton then pointed out that consultation meeting in February had endorsed only the idea that US proposal described several problems that it might be useful to look at. Subsequently US proposed a more elaborate list of projects. The more modest, step-by-step approaches being discussed by France, FRG, Japan, and UK would amount to compliance with what consultation had requested.

10. John Mainwaring (Canada), apparently somewhat taken aback by possibility of US withdrawal, stated he would be willing to meet with GG reps in evenings during early part of November 1974 governing body to discuss studies submitted by any GG members, and appropriate governing body papers such as in-depth reviews, in order to exchange views and arrive at co-ordinated GG position to be taken in governing body debate.

11. What we have left is UK's special study of ILO statistics, already funded and underway, and to be completed within a short time; Canadian analysis of ILO in-depth study on standard setting; FRG study on humanization of work which is being done independently of, but will be of interest to, GG; and proposals by France to do study of strengthening tripartite structures and Japan to study vocational training, the latter largely from domestic viewpoint. There will be no ten year focus, no separation from the ILO secretariat, and no vigorous presentation of results to ILO DG. Such one-country studies have been done before (e.g. Canadian study on integration of ILO assessment scale with that of UN) and do not constitute new initiative.

12. It perhaps inevitable that response to this first ambitious venture of group in field of joint program studies would be disappointing when compared with original expectations. The fact that those present at June 4 meeting reflected more the viewpoints of

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LABOR ministries than foreign offices should not be overlooked. The US proposal was handicapped from the outset in that it was a novel idea, presented on fairly short notice and not clearly spelled out as to details. The fact that we were never able to say precisely what we ourselves intended to do was an added difficulty. Given these handicaps and difficulties, the degree of willingness on the part of the majority to participate in some kind of roughly parallel, if not joint, action, even if this action not satisfactory in terms of our requirements, may augur reasonably well for future proposals for coordinated action of a less controversial nature.

13. The positions taken by GG reps on June 4 lead us to ILO conference to believe we should withdraw our sponsorship. We can withdraw with grace, using classic formula of

" IN VIEW OF LACK OF WIDESPREAD SUPPORT"

14. MISSION OF SIMILAR OPINION FOR REASONS CITED ABOVE AND BECAUSE
OF EVIDENT LACK OF UNIFIED AND STRONG SUPPORT FOR PROJECT IN OUR
OWN GOVERNMENT. DALE

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